

referred to 10/16/85

Heidegger . Philosophy of Right (1821)

ET TM know.

~~See also 108-10.~~

Key ideas:
man is
not just an
individual often
— it is social.

INTRODUCTION

[Concept of the Philosophy of Right, of the Will, Freedom, and Right.]

1. The subject-matter of the philosophical science of right is the Idea of right, i.e. the concept of right together with the actualization of that concept.

Philosophy has to do with Ideas, and therefore not with what are commonly dubbed "mere concepts." On the contrary, it exposes such concepts as one-sided and false, while showing at the same time that it is the concept alone (not the mere abstract category of the understanding which we often hear called by the name) which has actuality, and further that it gives this actuality to itself. All else, apart from this actuality established through the working of the concept itself, is ephemeral existence, external contingency, opinion, unsubstantial appearance, falsity, illusion, and so forth. The shapes which the concept assumes in the course of its actualization are indispensable for the knowledge of the concept itself. They are the second essential moment of the Idea, in distinction from the first, i.e. from its form, from its mode of being as concept alone.¹ [A.]

2. The science of right is a section of philosophy. Consequently, its task is to develop the Idea—the Idea being the rational factor in any object of study—out of the concept, or, what is the same thing, to look on at the proper immanent development of the thing itself. As a section, it has a definite starting-point, i.e. the result and the truth of what has preceded, and it is what has preceded which constitutes the so-called "proof" of the starting-point. Hence the concept of right, so far as its coming to be is concerned, falls outside the science of right; it is to be taken up here as given and its deduction is presupposed.²

According to the abstract, non-philosophical, method of the sciences, the first thing sought and demanded is a definition, or at any rate this demand is made for the sake of preserving the external form of scientific procedure. (But the science of positive law at least cannot be very intimately concerned with definitions since it begins in the first place by stating what is legal, i.e. what the particular legal provisions are, and for this reason the warning has

been given: *omnis definitio in jure civili periculosa*.³

In fact, the more disconnected and inherently contradictory are the provisions giving determinate character to a right, the less are any definitions in its field possible, for definitions should be stated in universal terms, while to use these immediately exposes in all its nakedness what contradicts them—the wrong in this instance. Thus in Roman law, for example, there could be no definition of "man," since "slave" could not be brought under it—the very status of slave indeed is an outrage on the conception of man; it would appear just as hazardous to attempt a definition of "property" and "proprietor" in many cases.) But the deduction of the definition is derived, it may be, from etymology, or especially by abstraction from particular cases, so that it is based on human feelings and ideas. The correctness of the definition is then made to lie in its correspondence with current ideas. This method neglects what is all-essential for science—i.e. in respect of content, the absolute necessity of the thing (right, in this instance), and, in respect of form, the nature of the concept.

The truth is that in philosophical knowledge the necessity of a concept is the principal thing; and the process of its production as a result is its proof and deduction. Then, once its content has been shown in this way to be necessary on its own account, the second step is to look round for what corresponds to it in our ideas and language. But this concept as it actually is in its truth not only may be different from our common idea of it, but in fact must be different from it in form and outline. If, however, the common idea of it is not false in content also, the concept may be exhibited as implied in it and as essentially present in it. In other words, the common idea may be raised to assume the form of the concept. But the common idea is so far from being the standard or criterion of the concept (which is necessary and true on its own account) that it must rather derive its truth from the latter, adjust itself to it, and recognize its own nature by its aid.

But while the above-mentioned abstract way of knowing with its formal definitions, syllogisms, proofs, and the like, is more or less a thing of the past, still it is a poor substitute which a different artifice has provided, namely to adopt and uphold Ideas in general (and in particular the Idea of right and its further specifications) as immediate "facts of

³ "In civil law, definition is always hazardous."—Ed.

¹ See Paragraph 32.—Ed.

² See Paragraphs 29 and 4.—Ed.

consciousness" and to make into the source of right our natural or our worked up feelings and the inspirations of our own hearts. This method may be the handiest of all, but it is also the most unphilosophical—not to mention here other aspects of such an outlook, which has a direct bearing on action and not simply on knowledge.¹ While the old method, abstract as it is, does at least insist on the *form* of the concept in its definition and the *form* of necessary knowledge in its demonstration, the artifice of feeling and immediate awareness elevates into a guiding principle the subjectivity, contingency, and arbitrariness of sapience. What constitutes scientific procedure in philosophy is expounded in philosophical logic and is here presupposed.² [A.]

3. Right is positive³ in general (a) when it has the *form* of being valid in a particular state, and this legal authority is the guiding principle for the knowledge of right in this positive form, i.e. for the science of positive law. (b) Right in this positive form acquires a positive element in its *content*

(a) through the particular national character of a people, its stage of historical development, and the whole complex of relations connected with the necessities of nature;⁴

(β) because a system of positive law must necessarily involve the application of the universal concept to particular, externally given, characteristics of objects and cases.⁵ This application lies outside speculative thought and the development of the concept, and is the subsumption by the Understanding [of the particular under the universal];

(γ) through the finally detailed provisions requisite for actually pronouncing judgement in court.

If inclination, caprice, and the sentiments of the heart are set up in opposition to positive right and the laws, philosophy at least cannot recognize authorities of that sort.—That force and tyranny may be an element in law is accidental to law and has nothing to do with its nature. Later on in this book, in Paragraphs 211-14, it will be shown at what point right must become positive. The details to be expounded there are being mentioned here only to indicate the limits of the philosophical study of law and to obviate at once any possible supposition, let alone demand, that the outcome of its systematic development should be a code of positive law, i.e. a code like the one an actual state requires.

Natural law, or law from the philosophical point of view, is distinct from positive law; but to pervert

¹ See e.g., Remarks to Paragraphs 126 and 140.—Ed.

² See Preface, p. 1.—Ed.

³ For the distinction between *Recht* and *Gesetz* see Paragraphs 211 ff.—Ed.

⁴ See the section on the "Geographical Basis of History" in the *Philosophy of History*, pp. 190 ff.—Ed.

⁵ See Remarks to Paragraphs 69, 212, 214.—Ed.

their difference into an opposition and a contradiction would be a gross misunderstanding. The relation between them is much more like that between Institutes and Pandects.

As for the historical element in positive law, mentioned above in Paragraph 3, Montesquieu⁶ proclaimed the true historical view, the genuinely philosophical position, namely that legislation both in general and in its particular provisions is to be treated not as something isolated and abstract but rather as a subordinate moment in a whole, interconnected with all the other features which make up the character of a nation and an epoch. It is in being so connected that the various laws acquire their true meaning and therewith their justification. To consider particular laws as they appear and develop in time is a purely historical task. Like acquaintance with what can be logically deduced from a comparison of these laws with previously existing legal principles, this task is appreciated and rewarded in its own sphere and has no relation whatever to the philosophical study of the subject—unless of course the derivation of particular laws from historical events is confused with their derivation from the concept, and the historical explanation and justification is stretched to become an absolutely valid justification. This difference, which is very important and should be firmly adhered to, is also very obvious. A particular law may be shown to be wholly grounded in and consistent with the circumstances and with existing legally established institutions, and yet it may be wrong and irrational in its essential character, like a number of provisions in Roman private law which followed quite logically from such institutions as Roman matrimony and Roman *patria potestas*.⁷ But even if particular laws are both right and reasonable, still it is one thing to *prove* that they have that character—which cannot be truly done except by means of the concept—and quite another to describe their appearance in history or the circumstances, contingencies, needs, and events which brought about their enactment. That kind of exposition and (pragmatic) knowledge, based on proximate or remote historical causes, is frequently called "explanation" or preferably "comprehension" by those who think that to expound history in this way is the only thing, or rather the essential thing, the only important thing, to be done in order to comprehend law or an established institution; whereas what is really essential, the concept of the thing, they have not discussed at all. From the same point of view, reference is commonly made also to the Roman or the German "concepts" of law, i.e. concepts of law as they might be defined in this or that legal code, whereas what is meant is not concepts but only general legal principles, propositions of the Understanding, maxims, positive laws, and the like.

By dint of obscuring the difference between the

⁶ Cf. Montesquieu, *The Spirit of Laws*, Book i, Chap. 3.—Ed.

⁷ See Remark and Addition to Paragraph 180.—Ed.

historical and the philosophical study comes possible to shift the point of view over from the problem of the true justification to a justification by appeal to deductions from presupposed conditions themselves may have no higher value to put in place of the absolute and the exact in place of the true nature of the things those who try to justify things on history confound an origin in external circumstances with one in the concept, they unconsciously do the very opposite of what they intend. Origin of an institution has been shown to be the purpose and necessary in the circumstances of the time, the demands of history have been taken into account. But if this is supposed to pass for a generalization of the thing itself, it turns out to be positive, because, since those circumstances no longer present, the institution so far justified has by their disappearance lost its right. Suppose, for example, that as a vindication of the monasteries for cultivating wildernesses and popularly keeping learning alive by transcribing and giving instruction, &c., and supposing this service has been deemed to be the purpose of their continued existence, it only follows from considering this past purpose since circumstances have now entirely changed that monasteries are at least in this respect and inappropriate.

Now that the historical meaning of the historical method of portraying the thing is comprehensible—is at home in a deduction from the philosophical survey of the thing and of a thing's coming to be to the thing and history are able to that extent to an attitude of mutual indifference. But always at peace in this way, even in science and so I quote something, relevant to which appears in Herr Hugo's *Lehrbuch des römischen Rechts*,⁸ and which at the same time cast further light on the fact that they are opposed. Herr Hugo says "I praise the Twelve Tables with a side-eye, the philosophers . . . but the philosopher treats them exactly as many a great philosopher since his day has treated positive law in context Herr Hugo makes the final remark of the subject like Favorinus" with the reason for it that "Favorinus understood the Twelve Tables just as little as these have understood positive law."

The correction of the philosopher Favorinus by the jurist Sextus Caecilius in Aulus Gellius is an expression of the permanent and

⁸ For some of Hegel's criticisms of Savigny see graph 211.—Ed.

⁹ Gustav, Ritter von Hugo, *Text-book of Roman Law*.—Ed.

¹⁰ 5th edn., § 53.

¹¹ *Noctes Atticae*, xx. 1.

systematized whole. This whole, as what is substantive, is independent of the opposition between a merely subjective aim and its realization and is the same in both despite their difference in form.

29. An existent of any sort embodying the free will, this is what right is. Right therefore is by definition freedom as Idea.

The crucial point in both the Kantian and the generally accepted definition of right (see the Introduction to Kant's *Philosophy of Law*) is the "restriction which makes it possible for my freedom or self-will to co-exist with the self-will of each and all according to a universal law." On the one hand, this definition contains only a negative category, restriction, while on the other hand the positive factor—the universal law or the so-called "law of reason," the correspondence of the self-will of one individual with that of another—is tantamount to the principle of contradiction and the familiar notion of abstract identity. The definition of right which I have quoted involves that way of looking at the matter, especially popular since Rousseau,³ according to which what is fundamental, substantive, and primary is supposed to be the will of a single person in his own private self-will, not the absolute or rational will, and mind as a particular individual, not mind as it is in its truth. Once this principle is adopted, of course the rational can come on the scene only as a restriction on the type of freedom which this principle involves, and so also not as something immanently rational but only as an external abstract universal. This view is devoid of any speculative thinking and is repudiated by the philosophic concept. And the phenomena which it has produced both in men's heads and in the world are of a frightfulness parallel only to the superficiality of the thoughts on which they are based.

30. It is only because right is the embodiment of the absolute concept or of self-conscious freedom that it is something sacrosanct. But the exclusively formal character of right (and duty also, as we shall see)⁴ arises at a distinct stage in the development of the concept of freedom. By contrast with the right which is comparatively formal (i.e. abstract) and so comparatively restricted, a higher right belongs to the sphere and stage of mind in which mind has determined and actualized within itself the further moments contained in its Idea; and it belongs to this sphere as the sphere which is concrete, intrinsically richer, and more genuinely universal.

Every stage in the development of the Idea of freedom has its own special right, since it is the embodiment of freedom in one of its proper specific forms. When there is said to be a clash between the

moral or the ethical and the right, the right in question is only the elementary, formal, right of abstract personality. Morality, ethical life, the interest of the state, each of these is a right of a special character because each of them is a specific form and embodiment of freedom. They can come into collision with each other only in so far as they are all on the same footing as rights. If mind's moral attitude were not also a right, or freedom in one of its forms, it could not possibly come into collision with the right of personality or with any other right, because any right whatever has inherent in it the concept of freedom, i.e. the highest category of mind, in contrast with which any other thing is without substance. Yet at the same time collision involves another moment, namely the fact that it is restrictive, and so if two rights collide one is subordinated to the other. It is only the right of the world-mind which is absolute without qualification.

31. The method whereby, in philosophic science, the concept develops itself out of itself is expounded in logic and is here likewise presupposed.⁵ Its development is a purely immanent progress, the engendering of its determinations. Its advance is not effected by the assertion that various things exist and then by the application of the universal to extraneous material of that sort culled from elsewhere.

The concept's moving principle, which alike engenders and dissolves the particularizations of the universal. I call "dialectic," though I do not mean that dialectic which takes an object, proposition, &c., given to feeling or, in general, to immediate consciousness, and explains it away, confuses it, pursues it this way and that, and has as its sole task the deduction of the contrary of that with which it starts—a negative type of dialectic commonly appearing even in Plato. Dialectic of this kind may regard as its final result either the contrary of the idea with which it begins, or, if it is as incisive as the scepticism of the ancients, the contradictory of this idea, or again, it may be feeble enough to be content with an "approximation" to the truth, a modern half-measure.⁶ The loftier dialectic of the concept consists not simply in producing the determination as a contrary and a restriction, but in producing and seizing upon the positive content and outcome of the determination, because it is this which makes it solely a development and an immanent progress. Moreover, this dialectic is not an activity of subjective thinking applied to some matter externally, but is rather the matter's very soul putting forth its branches and fruit organically. This development of the Idea is the proper activity of its rationality, and thinking, as something subjective, merely looks on at it without for its part adding to it any ingredient of its own. To consider a thing rationally means not to

³ See Paragraph 2.—Ed.

⁴ Plato—it is usually the second half of the *Parmenides* which Hegel has in mind.—Ed.

⁵ Cf. Rousseau, *The Social Contract*, i, 6.—Ed.

⁶ Paragraphs 133 ff.—Ed.

bring reason to bear on the object from the outside and so to tamper with it, but to find that the object is rational on its own account; here it is mind in its freedom, the culmination of self-conscious reason, which gives itself actuality and engenders itself as an existing world. The sole task of philosophic science is to bring into consciousness this proper work of the reason of the thing itself.

32. The determinations of the concept in the course of its development are from one point of view themselves concepts, but from another they take the form of existents, since the concept is in essence Idea. The series of concepts which this development yields is therefore at the same time a series of shapes of experience, and philosophic science must treat them accordingly.

In a more speculative sense, a concept's determinacy and its mode of existence are one and the same thing. But it is to be noticed that the moments, whose result is a further determined form of the concept, precede it in the philosophical development of the Idea as determinations of the concept, but they do not go in advance of it in the temporal development as shapes of experience. Thus, for instance, the Idea determined as the family, presupposes the determinations of the concept from which the family will later on in this work be shown to result. But the explicit existence of these inner presuppositions as shapes of experience also, e.g. as the right of property, contract, morality, and so forth, is the other aspect of the development, and it is only in a higher and more complete civilization that the development has gone so far as to endow its moments with this appropriately shaped existence. [A.]

Division of the Subject

33. In correspondence with the stages in the development of the Idea of the absolutely free will, the will is

A. immediate; its concept therefore is abstract, namely personality, and its embodiment is an immediate external thing—the sphere of *Abstract or Formal Right*;

B. reflected from its external embodiment into itself—it is then characterized as subjective individuality in opposition to the universal. The universal here is characterized as something inward, the good, and also as something outward, a world presented to the will; both these sides of the Idea are here mediated only by each other. This is the Idea in its division or in its existence as particular; and here we have the right of the subjective will in relation to the right of the world and the right of the Idea, though only the

Idea implicit—the sphere of *Morality*;

C. the unity and truth of both these abstract moments—the Idea of the good not only apprehended in thought but so realized both in the will reflected into itself and in the external world that freedom exists as substance, as actuality and necessity, no less than as subjective will; this is the Idea in its absolutely universal existence—*Ethical Life*.

But on the same principle the ethical substance is

(a) natural mind, the *Family*;

(b) in its division and appearance, *Civil Society*;

(c) the *State* as freedom, freedom universal and objective even in the free self-subsistence of the particular will. This actual and organic mind (a) of a single nation (β) reveals and actualizes itself through the inter-relation of the particular national minds until (γ) in the process of world-history it reveals and actualizes itself as the universal world-mind whose right is supreme.

The fact that when a thing or a content is posited first of all in accordance with its concept or as it is implicitly, it then has the form of immediacy or pure being, is the doctrine of speculative logic, here presupposed; the concept which confronts itself in the form of the concept is a different thing and no longer something immediate.

The principle which determines the division of the subject is likewise here presupposed. The division may also be looked upon as a predeclaration in historical form of the parts of the book, since the various stages must engender themselves out of the subject-matter itself as moments in the development of the Idea. A philosophical division is far from being an external one, i.e. it is not an external classification of a given material in accordance with one or more borrowed bases of division, but, on the contrary, is the immanent self-differentiation of the concept.

"Morality" and "ethical life,"¹ which perhaps usually pass current as synonyms, are taken here in essentially different senses. Yet even commonplace thinking seems to be distinguishing them; Kant generally prefers to use the word "morality" and, since the principles of action in his philosophy are always limited to this conception, they make the standpoint of ethical life completely impossible, in fact they explicitly nullify and spurn it. But even if "moral" and "ethical" meant the same thing by derivation, that would in no way hinder them, once they had become different words, from being used for different conceptions. [A.]

¹ See Paragraph 141.—Ed.

34. The absolute will is abstract in its concept is abstract in its character of immediacy, negative actuality, the real world, only actuality—the inherent. Pursuant to the moment of the will, it has in itself determinate aims and it has this content of the world directly contained.

35. The universal will is abstract in its concept but otherwise concrete in itself to itself in its point of view the subject implies that as this is determined on every impulse, and desire (internal facts) and so I am simply and so before in finitude I know finite, universal, and

Personality begins in universal consciousness determined in some his consciousness of ego in which every negated and without fore, knowledge is known but an object raises simple infinity and so individuals and nations they have achieved themselves. Mind phenomenal mind in which the latter is consciousness of self but universal will and its stiller has itself, as the object and aim, and

36. (1) Personality

¹ See Paragraph 5.

² See *Phenomenology*, pp. 101 ff. [Eng. tr. § 344 [3rd edn. § 42]

Naturphilosophie und Staatswissenschaft
Schiller in Göttingen (1821)
= The Philosophy of Right

THIRD PART

ETHICAL LIFE

① Freedom
et E/O : Subject
② Objectivity
et subjectivity
③ Manly + a
Faith

142. Ethical life is the Idea of freedom in that on the one hand it is the good become alive—the good endowed in self-consciousness with knowing and willing and actualized by self-conscious action—while on the other hand self-consciousness has in the ethical realm its absolute foundation and the end which actuates its effort.¹ Thus ethical life is the concept of freedom developed into the existing world and the nature of self-consciousness.

143. Since this unity of the concept of the will with its embodiment—i.e. the particular will—is knowing, consciousness of the distinction between these two moments of the Idea is present, but present in such a way that now each of these moments is in its own eyes the totality of the Idea and has that totality as its foundation and content.²

144. (a) The objective ethical order, which comes on the scene in place of good in the abstract, is substance made concrete by subjectivity as infinite form.³ Hence it posits within itself distinctions whose specific character is thereby determined by the concept,⁴ and which endow the ethical order with a stable content independently necessary and subsistent in exaltation above subjective opinion and caprice. These distinctions are absolutely valid laws and institutions. [A.]

145. It is the fact that the ethical order is the system of these specific determinations of the Idea which constitutes its rationality. Hence the ethical order is freedom or the absolute will as what is objective, a circle of necessity whose moments are the ethical powers which regulate the life of individuals. To these powers individuals are related as accidents to substance, and it is in individuals that these powers are

represented, have the shape of appearance, and become actualized.⁵ [A.]

146. (β) The substantial order, in the self-consciousness which it has thus actually attained in individuals, knows itself and so is an object of knowledge. This ethical substance and its laws and powers are on the one hand an object over against the subject, and from his point of view they *are*—“are” in the highest sense of self-subsistent being. This is an absolute authority and power infinitely more firmly established than the being of nature.⁶

The sun, the moon, mountains, rivers, and the natural objects of all kinds by which we are surrounded, *are*. For consciousness they have the authority not only of mere being but also of possessing a particular nature which it accepts and to which it adjusts itself in dealing with them, using them, or in being otherwise concerned with them. The authority of ethical laws is infinitely higher, because natural objects conceal rationality under the cloak of contingency and exhibit it only in their utterly external and disconnected way.

147. On the other hand, they *are not something alien* to the subject. On the contrary, his spirit bears witness to them as to its own essence, the essence in which he has a feeling of his selfhood, and in which he lives as in his own element which is not distinguished from himself. The subject in thus directly linked to the ethical order by a relation which is more like an identity than even the relation of faith or trust.

Faith and trust emerge along with reflection; they presuppose the power of forming ideas and making distinctions. For example, it is one thing to be a pagan, a different thing to believe in a pagan religion. This relation or rather this absence of relation, this identity in which the ethical order is the actual living soul of self-consciousness, can no doubt pass over into a relation of faith and conviction and into a relation produced by means of further reflection, i.e. into an *insight* due to reasoning starting perhaps

¹ See Paragraphs 258 and 146-7.—Ed.

² See Paragraphs 109, 144-5, and 146-7.—Ed.

³ See Paragraph 156.—Ed.

⁴ See Paragraphs 7, 262, 269-70, and 272.—Ed.

⁵ See Remark to Paragraph 163.—Ed.

⁶ See Addition to Paragraph 44.—Ed.

from some particular purposes, interests, and considerations, from fear or hope, or from historical conditions. But adequate *knowledge* of this identity depends on thinking in terms of the concept.

148. As substantive in character, these laws and institutions are duties binding on the will of the individual, because as subjective, as inherently undetermined, or determined as particular, he distinguishes himself from them and hence stands related to them as to the substance of his own being.

The "doctrine of duties" in moral philosophy (I mean the objective doctrine, not that which is supposed to be contained in the empty principle of moral subjectivity, because that principle determines nothing—see Paragraph 134) is therefore comprised in the systematic development of the circle of ethical necessity¹ which follows in this Third Part. The difference between the exposition in this book and the form of a "doctrine of duties"² lies solely in the fact that, in what follows, the specific types of ethical life turn up as necessary relationships; there the exposition ends, without being supplemented in each case by the addition that "therefore men have a duty to conform to this institution."

A "doctrine of duties" which is other than a philosophical science takes its material from existing relationships and shows its connexion with the moralist's personal notions or with principles and thoughts, purposes, impulses, feelings, &c., that are forthcoming everywhere; and as reasons for accepting each duty in turn, it may tack on its further consequences in their bearing on the other ethical relationships or on welfare and opinion. But an immanent and logical "doctrine of duties" can be nothing except the serial exposition of the relationships which are necessitated by the Idea of freedom and are therefore actual in their entirety, to wit in the state.

149. The bond of duty can appear as a restriction only on indeterminate subjectivity or abstract freedom, and on the impulses either of the natural will or of the moral will which determines its indeterminate good arbitrarily. The truth is, however, that in duty the individual finds his liberation; first, liberation from dependence on mere natural impulse and from the depression which as a particular subject he cannot escape in his moral reflections on what ought to be and what might be; secondly, liberation from the indeterminate subjectivity which, never reaching reality or the objective determinacy of action, remains self-enclosed and devoid of actuality. In duty the individual acquires his substantive freedom. [A.]

¹ See Addition to Paragraph 2.—Ed.

² See Remark to Paragraph 150.—Ed.

150. Virtue is the ethical order reflected in the individual character so far as that character is determined by its natural endowment. When virtue displays itself solely as the individual's simple conformity with the duties of the station to which he belongs, it is rectitude.

In an *ethical* community, it is easy to say what man must do, what are the duties he has to fulfil in order to be virtuous: he has simply to follow the well-known and explicit rules of his own situation. Rectitude is the general character which may be demanded of him by law or custom. But from the standpoint of *morality*, rectitude often seems to be something comparatively inferior, something beyond which still higher demands must be made on oneself and others, because the craving to be something special is not satisfied with what is absolute and universal; it finds consciousness of peculiarity only in what is exceptional.

The various facets of rectitude may equally well be called virtues, since they are also properties of the individual, although not specially of him in contrast with others. Talk about virtue, however, readily borders on empty rhetoric, because it is only about something abstract and indeterminate; and furthermore, argumentative and expository talk of the sort is addressed to the individual as to a being of caprice and subjective inclination. In an existing ethical order in which a complete system of ethical relations has been developed and actualized, virtue in the strict sense of the word is in place and actually appears only in exceptional circumstances or when one obligation clashes with another. The clash, however, must be a genuine one, because moral reflection can manufacture clashes of all sorts to suit its purpose and give itself a consciousness of being something special and having made sacrifices. It is for this reason that the phenomenon of virtue proper is commoner when societies and communities are uncivilized, since in those circumstances ethical conditions and their actualization are more a matter of private choice or the natural genius of an exceptional individual. For instance, it was especially to Hercules that the ancients ascribed virtue. In the states of antiquity, ethical life had not grown into this free system of an objective order self-subsistently developed, and consequently it was by the personal genius of individuals that this defect had to be made good. It follows that if a "doctrine of virtues" is not a mere "doctrine of duties," and if therefore it embraces the particular facet of character, the facet grounded in natural endowment, it will be a natural history of mind.

Since virtues are ethical principles applied to the particular, and since in this their subjective aspect they are something indeterminate, there turns up here for determining them the quantitative principle of more or less. The result is that consideration of them introduces their corresponding defects or vices, as in Aristotle, who defined each particular virtue

as strictly a mean between

The content which assumes then virtues is the same form of impulses (see Paragraph 134). Impulses have the same content as virtues, but in impulses the immediate will and the not been developed to the Consequently, impulses content of duties and virtues on which they are subordinate in itself, and so discriminate them as good impulses, considered abstractly alone, are good, while their negative aspect alone graph 18). [A.]

151. But when individual with the actual order, appears as their general custom¹ (*Sitte*), while ethical living appears as put in the place of the will, is the soul of custom and through, the significance of its existence. It is in a world, and the substance now for the first time

152. In this way the has attained its right. That is to say, the self-vanished together with which had claimed independence to the ethical character is ethical, he which moves him to act itself unmoved but is determinations as rational that his own dignity and his particular ends are universal, and it is there these. Subjectivity form and existent act in order, and the distinction the one hand and substance object, end, and control subject, is the same as, and along with, the distinctive form.

Subjectivity is the ground freedom is realized (see Paragraph 134). Subjectivity of morality, subjectivity in freedom, the concept of subjective ethical life it is the realization way adequate to the concept

¹ Cf. Pascal, *Pensée* 93.—

Duty
d E / O

as strictly a mean between an excess and a deficiency.

The content which assumes the form of duties and then virtues is the same as that which also has the form of impulses (see Remark to Paragraph 19). Impulses have the same basic content as duties and virtues, but in impulses this content still belongs to the immediate will and to instinctive feeling; it has not been developed to the point of becoming ethical. Consequently, impulses have in common with the content of duties and virtues only the abstract object on which they are directed, an object indeterminate in itself, and so devoid of anything to discriminate them as good or evil. Or in other words, impulses, considered abstractly in their positive aspect alone, are good; while, considered abstractly in their negative aspect alone, they are evil (see Paragraph 18). [A.]

151. But when individuals are simply identified with the actual order, ethical life (*das Sittliche*) appears as their general mode of conduct, i.e. as custom¹ (*Sitte*), while the habitual practice of ethical living appears as a second nature which, put in the place of the initial, purely natural will, is the soul of custom permeating it through and through, the significance and the actuality of its existence. It is mind living and present as a world, and the substance of mind thus exists now for the first time as mind. [A.]

152. In this way the ethical substantial order has attained its right, and its right its validity. That is to say, the self-will of the individual has vanished together with his private conscience which had claimed independence and opposed itself to the ethical substance. For, when his character is ethical, he recognizes as the end which moves him to act the universal which is itself unmoved but is disclosed in its specific determinations as rationality actualized. He knows that his own dignity and the whole stability of his particular ends are grounded in this same universal, and it is therein that he actually attains these. Subjectivity is itself the absolute form and existent actuality of the substantial order, and the distinction between subject on the one hand and substance on the other, as the object, end, and controlling power of the subject, is the same as, and has vanished directly along with, the distinction between them in form.

Subjectivity is the ground wherein the concept of freedom is realized (see Paragraph 106). At the level of morality, subjectivity is still distinct from freedom, the concept of subjectivity; but at the level of ethical life it is the realization of the concept in a way adequate to the concept itself.

¹ Cf. Pascal, *Pensée* 93.—Ed.

153. The right of individuals to be subjectively destined to freedom is fulfilled when they belong to an actual ethical order, because their conviction of their freedom finds its truth in such an objective order, and it is in an ethical order that they are actually in possession of their own essence or their own inner universality (see Paragraph 147).

When a father inquired about the best method of educating his son in ethical conduct, a Pythagorean replied: "Make him a citizen of a state with good laws." (The phrase has also been attributed to others.) [A.]

154. The right of individuals to their *particular* satisfaction is also contained in the ethical substantial order, since particularity is the outward appearance of the ethical order—a mode in which that order is existent.

155. Hence in this identity of the universal will with the particular will, right and duty coalesce, and by being in the ethical order a man has rights in so far as he has duties, and duties in so far as he has rights. In the sphere of abstract right, I have the right and another has the corresponding duty. In the moral sphere, the right of my private judgement and will, as well as of my happiness, has not, but only ought to have, coalesced with duties and become objective. [A.]

156. The ethical substance, as containing independent self-consciousness united with its concept, is the actual mind of a family and a nation. [A.]

157. The concept of this Idea has being only as mind, as something knowing itself and actual, because it is the objectification of itself, the movement running through the form of its moments. It is therefore

(A) ethical mind in its natural or immediate phase—the *Family*. This substantiality loses its unity, passes over into division, and into the phase of relation, i.e. into

(B) *Civil Society*—an association of members as self-subsistent individuals in a universality which, because of their self-subsistence, is only abstract. Their association is brought about by their needs, by the legal system—the means to security of person and property—and by an external organization for attaining their particular and common interests. This external state

(C) is brought back to and welded into unity in the *Constitution of the State* which is the end and actuality of both the substantial universal order and the public life devoted thereto.

Sub-section I
THE FAMILY

158. The family, as the immediate substantiality of mind, is specifically characterized by love, which is mind's feeling of its own unity. Hence in a family, one's frame of mind is to have self-consciousness of one's individuality within this unity as the absolute essence of oneself, with the result that one is in it not as an independent person but as a member. [A.]

159. The right which the individual enjoys on the strength of the family unity and which is in the first place simply the individual's life within this unity, takes on the *form* of right (as the abstract moment of determinate individuality) only when the family begins to dissolve. At that point those who should be family-members both in their inclination and in actuality begin to be self-subsistent persons, and whereas they formerly constituted one specific moment within the whole, they now receive their share separately and so only in an external fashion by way of money, food, educational expenses, and the like. [A.]

160. The family is completed in these three phases:

(a) *Marriage*, the form assumed by the concept of the family in its immediate phase;

(b) *Family Property and Capital* (the external embodiment of the concept) and attention to these;

(c) *The Education of Children and the Dissolution of the Family*.

A. Marriage

161. Marriage, as the immediate type of ethical relationship, contains first, the moment of physical life; and since marriage is a *substantial* tie, the life involved in it is life in its totality, i.e. as the actuality of the race and its life-process.¹ But, secondly, in self-consciousness the natural sexual union—a union purely inward or implicit and for that very reason *existent* as purely external—is changed into a union on the level of mind, into self-conscious love. [A.]

162. On the subjective side, marriage may have a more obvious source in the particular inclination of the two persons who are entering upon the marriage tie, or in the foresight and contrivance of the parents, and so forth. But its objective source lies in the free consent of the persons, especially in their consent to make them-

¹ Cf. *Enc.* [1st edn.], §§ 167 ff. and §§ 288 ff. [3rd edn. §§ 220 ff. and §§ 366 ff.].

selves one person, to renounce their natural and individual personality to this unity of one with the other. From this point of view, their union is a self-restriction, but in fact it is their liberation, because in it they attain their substantive self-consciousness.

Our objectively appointed end and so our ethical duty is to enter the married state. The external origin of any *particular* marriage is in the nature of the case contingent, and it depends principally on the extent to which reflective thought has been developed. At one extreme, the first step is that the marriage is arranged by the contrivance of benevolent parents; the appointed end of the parties is a union of mutual love, and their inclination to marry arises from the fact that each grows acquainted with the other from the first as a destined partner. At the other extreme, it is the inclination of the parties which comes first, appearing in them as *these* two infinitely particularized individuals. The more ethical way to matrimony may be taken to be the former extreme or any way at all whereby the decision to marry comes first and the inclination to do so follows, so that in the actual wedding both decision and inclination coalesce. In the latter extreme, it is the uniqueness of the infinitely particularized which makes good its claims in accordance with the subjective principle of the modern world (see Remark to Paragraph 124).

But those works of modern art, dramatic and other, in which the love of the sexes is the main interest, are pervaded by a chill despite the heat of passion they portray, for they associate the passion with accident throughout and represent the entire dramatic interest as if it rested solely on the characters as *these individuals*; what rests on them may indeed be of infinite importance to *them*, but is of none whatever in itself.² [A.]

163. The ethical aspect of marriage consists in the parties' consciousness of this unity as their substantive aim, and so in their love, trust, and common sharing of their entire existence as individuals. When the parties are in this frame of mind and their union is actual, their physical passion sinks to the level of a physical moment, destined to vanish in its very satisfaction. On the other hand, the spiritual bond of union secures its rights as the substance of marriage and thus rises, inherently indissoluble to a plane above the contingency of passion and the transience of particular caprice.

It was noted above (in Paragraph 75) that marriage, so far as its essential basis is concerned, is not a contractual relation. On the contrary, though marriage begins in contract, it is precisely a contract to transcend the standpoint of contract, the standpoint from which persons are regarded in their individ-

² See the footnote to Remark (f) to Paragraph 140.—Ed.

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uality as self-subsistent units. The identification of personalities, whereby the family becomes one person and its members become its accidents (though substance is in essence the relation of accidents to itself¹), is the ethical mind. Taken by itself and stripped of the manifold externals of which it is possessed owing to its embodiment in *these* individuals and the interests of the phenomenal realm, interests limited in time and numerous other ways, this mind emerges in a shape for representative thinking and has been revered as *Penates*, &c.; and in general it is in this mind that the religious character of marriage and the family, or *pietas*, is grounded. It is a further abstraction still to separate the divine, or the substantive, from its body, and then to stamp it, together with the feeling and consciousness of mental unity, as what is falsely called "Platonic" love. This separation is in keeping with the monastic doctrine which characterizes the moment of physical life as purely negative and which, precisely by thus separating the physical from the mental, endows the former by itself with infinite importance. [A.]

164. Mere agreement to the stipulated terms of a contract in itself involves the genuine transfer of the property in question (see Paragraph 79). Similarly, the solemn declaration by the parties of their consent to enter the ethical bond of marriage, and its corresponding recognition and confirmation by their family and community, constitutes the formal completion and actuality of marriage. The knot is tied and made ethical only after this ceremony, whereby through the use of signs, i.e. of language (the most mental embodiment of mind—see Paragraph 78), the substantial thing in the marriage is brought completely into being. As a result, the sensuous moment, the one proper to physical life, is put into its ethical place as something only consequential and accidental, belonging to the external embodiment of the ethical bond, which indeed can subsist exclusively in reciprocal love and support.

If with a view to framing or criticizing legal enactments, the question is asked: what should be regarded as the chief end of marriage?, the question may be taken to mean: which single facet of marriage in its actuality is to be regarded as the most essential one? No one facet by itself, however, makes up the whole range of its implicit and explicit content, i.e. of its ethical character, and one or other of its facets may be lacking in an existing marriage without detriment to the essence of marriage itself.

It is in the actual conclusion of a marriage, i.e. in the wedding, that the essence of the tie is expressed and established beyond dispute as something ethical,

¹ See *Enc.* [1st edn.], § 98 [3rd edn. § 150].

² The fact that the church comes in in this connexion is a further point, but not one for discussion here. See footnote 2, p. 85.

raised above the contingency of feeling and private inclination. If this ceremony is taken as an external formality, a mere so-called "civil requirement," it is thereby stripped of all significance except perhaps that of serving the purpose of edification and attesting the civil relation of the parties. It is reduced indeed to a mere *fiat* of a civil or ecclesiastical authority. As such it appears as something not merely indifferent to the true nature of marriage, but actually alien to it. The heart is constrained by the law to attach a value to the formal ceremony and the latter is looked upon merely as a condition which must precede the complete mutual surrender of the parties to one another. As such it appears to bring disunion into their loving disposition and, like an alien intruder, to thwart the inwardness of their union. Such a doctrine pretentiously claims to afford the highest conception of the freedom, inwardness, and perfection of love; but in fact it is a travesty of the ethical aspect of love, the higher aspect which restrains purely sensual impulse and puts it in the background. Such restraint is already present at the instinctive level in shame, and it rises to chastity and modesty as consciousness becomes more specifically intelligent. In particular, the view just criticized casts aside marriage's specifically ethical character, which consists in this, that the consciousness of the parties is crystallized out of its physical and subjective mode and lifted to the thought of what is substantive; instead of continually reserving to itself the contingency and caprice of bodily desire, it removes the marriage bond from the province of this caprice, surrenders to the substantive, and swears allegiance to the *Penates*; the physical moment it subordinates until it becomes something wholly conditioned by the true and ethical character of the marriage relation and by the recognition of the bond as an ethical one. It is effrontery and its buttress, the Understanding, which cannot apprehend the speculative character of the substantial tie; nevertheless, with this speculative character there correspond both ethical purity of heart and the legislation of Christian peoples. [A.]

165. The difference in the physical characteristics of the two sexes has a rational basis and consequently acquires an intellectual and ethical significance. This significance is determined by the difference into which the ethical substantiality, as the concept, internally sunders itself in order that its vitality may become a concrete unity consequent upon this difference.

166. Thus one sex is mind in its self-diremption into explicit personal self-subsistence and the knowledge and volition of free universality, i.e. the self-consciousness of conceptual thought and the volition of the objective final end. The other sex is mind maintaining itself in unity as knowledge and volition of the substantive, but knowledge and volition in the form of concrete indi-

viduality and feeling. In relation to externality, the former is powerful and active, the latter passive and subjective. It follows that man has his actual substantive life in the state, in learning, and so forth, as well as in labour and struggle with the external world and with himself so that it is only out of his diremption that he fights his way to self-subsistent unity with himself. In the family he has a tranquil intuition of this unity, and there he lives a subjective ethical life on the plane of feeling. Woman, on the other hand, has her substantive destiny in the family, and to be imbued with family piety is her ethical frame of mind.

For this reason, family piety is expounded in Sophocles' *Antigone*—one of the most sublime presentations of this virtue—as principally the law of woman, and as the law of a substantiality at once subjective and on the plane of feeling, the law of the inward life, a life which has not yet attained its full actualization; as the law of the ancient gods, "the gods of the underworld"; as "an everlasting law, and no man knows at what time it was first put forth." "This law is there displayed as a law opposed to public law, to the law of the land. This is the supreme opposition in ethics and therefore in tragedy; and it is individualized in the same play in the opposing natures of man and woman." [A.]

167. In essence marriage is monogamy because it is personality—immediate exclusive individuality—which enters into this tie and surrenders itself to it; and hence the tie's truth and inwardness (i.e. the subjective form of its substantiality) proceeds only from the mutual, wholehearted, surrender of this personality. Personality attains its right of being conscious of itself in another only in so far as the other is in this identical relationship as a person, i.e. as an atomic individual.

Marriage, and especially monogamy, is one of the absolute principles on which the ethical life of a community depends. Hence marriage comes to be regarded as one of the moments in the founding of states by gods or heroes.

168. Further, marriage results from the free surrender by both sexes of their personality—a personality in every possible way unique in each of the parties. Consequently, it ought not to be entered by two people identical in stock who are already acquainted and perfectly known to one another; for individuals in the same circle of relationship have no special personality of their own in contrast with that of others in the same circle. On the contrary, the parties should be

Cf. Sophocles, *Antigone*, II. 450-7.—Ed.
* Cf. *Phenomenology* [1st edn.], pp. 383 ff., 417 ff.
[Eng. tr. pp. 466 ff., 495 ff.]

drawn from separate families and their personalities should be different in origin. Since the very conception of marriage is that it is a freely undertaken ethical transaction, not a tie directly grounded in the physical organism and its desires, it follows that the marriage of blood-relations runs counter to this conception and so also to genuine natural feeling.

Marriage itself is sometimes said to be grounded not in natural rights but simply in instinctive sexual impulses; or again it is treated as a contract with an arbitrary basis. External arguments in support of monogamy have been drawn from physical considerations such as the number of men and women. Dark feelings of repulsion are advanced as the sole ground for prohibiting consanguineous marriage. The basis of all these views is the fashionable idea of a state of nature and a natural origin for rights, and the lack of the concept of rationality and freedom. [A.]

169. The family, as person, has its real external existence in property; and it is only when this property takes the form of capital that it becomes the embodiment of the substantial personality of the family.

B. The Family Capital

170. It is not merely property which a family possesses; as a universal and enduring person, it requires possessions specifically determined as permanent and secure, i.e. it requires capital. The arbitrariness of a single owner's particular needs is one moment in property taken abstractly; but this moment, together with the selfishness of desire, is here transformed into something ethical, into labour and care for a common possession.

In the sagas of the founding of states, or at least of a social and orderly life, the introduction of permanent property is linked with the introduction of marriage. The nature of this capital, however, and the proper means of its consolidation will appear in the section on civil society.²

171. The family as a legal entity in relation to others must be represented by the husband as its head. Further, it is his prerogative to go out and work for its living, to attend to its needs, and to control and administer its capital. This capital is common property so that, while no member of the family has property of his own, each has his right in the common stock. This right, however, may come into collision with the head of the family's right of administration owing to the fact that the ethical temper of the family is still only at the level of immediacy (see Paragraph

² See Paragraphs 199 ff. and 253.—Ed.

158) and so is contingency.

172. A marriage which is self-subsistent in clans or "households" has been drawn. The family has a nature of its own, the new family type. Thus an essential connection and only a relation to his

The significance of the restriction of their goods, of legal assistance for their being provided the marriage, etc. They are in such an eventuality family shall secure [A.]

C. The Ethical Disposition

173. In substance only a unity of outward existence is considered in the two children that the unity, subjectively, and external parents love the embodiment of physical point of persons immediately becomes a result to the infinite producing the next fore. This is the of the *Penates* sphere of nature

174. Children's education at the mon capital. The service as service on and is restricted after the right of the parents is determined. Discipline and education does not aim more subjective deter them from tools of nature and consciousness and

175. Children's

Kierkegaard's Leap or Schaeffer's Step?

The religious philosopher and the evangelical thinker disagree on the nature of faith.

MOST OF THOSE WHO ENCOUNTERED Francis Schaeffer in his early days at L'Abri, in the Swiss Alpine village of Huémoz, will remember that one of the ways Schaeffer began to attract attention was by a ferocious attack on the ideas and influence of the melancholy Dane, Kierkegaard. This was shocking to many young evangelical theological students who encountered Schaeffer in those days, because a Kierkegaard renaissance was under way in the 1950s and 1960s, and many evangelicals were fascinated by him. What we saw was Kierkegaard's utter seriousness and intensity. What Schaeffer told us to look at was his absurdity.

Kierkegaard launched a protest against the smug, self-satisfied churchly Christianity of his own day, which thought that Christianity was identical to nineteenth-century bourgeois, comfortable civility. He challenged his generation to take the gospel with radical seriousness, to make a "leap of faith" into the "unknown." For Schaeffer this was a counsel of despair. Not being able to prove the truth of Christianity, Kierkegaard, Schaeffer thought, told people in effect, "Just believe." Faith involves a leap, Kierkegaard said in many places and many ways, including his most famous work, *Fear and Trembling*, a series of imaginative accounts about how Abraham might have reacted to God's command to sacrifice Isaac, his only legitimate son. For Schaeffer, Kierkegaard thought Abraham was just obeying, as a kind of leap in the dark, with no confidence at all that God was not playing a cruel joke on him. Schaeffer, by contrast, contended that Abraham never doubted that God would preserve Isaac or restore him. Thus Abraham says, when leaving with Isaac, "I and the lad will go, and [we] will come again" (Gen. 22:5). It was not a leap at all, but a confident step, trusting that God would fulfill his promise to Abraham and his descendants, despite the apparently self-defeating command to



sacrifice Isaac. Schaeffer stressed that there are what he called "good and sufficient reasons" for trusting God, and faith does not involve a "leap" but only a step.

Schaeffer's quarrel with Kierkegaard is based on the conviction that Kierkegaard was not interested in the content of one's beliefs, but only in the existential attitude of believing. If this is true, then Kierkegaard could not have been a real Christian. Many of Kierkegaard's Christian admirers claim that Kierkegaard, as a nineteenth-century Danish Lutheran, never for a moment questioned the truth of the great creeds and confessions, but was concerned to get people to see their absolutely overwhelming impact—indeed, more than merely to see it, to feel it.

For Schaeffer, Abraham's obedience was truly Christian (by anticipation) because he trusted God, and was not swayed by the apparent absurdity and even cruelty of God's command to sacrifice Isaac. Kierkegaard's Abraham did what God told him to do, but unlike Schaeffer's, he did it not in quiet confidence but in tremendous anguish of soul, alternating between feelings of despair and rage.

With Scandinavia's nautical heritage in view, Kierkegaard likened trusting God to stepping out on 20,000 fathoms of depth, without being sure, only trusting to be upheld. With the Alps in front of his window, Schaeffer likened trusting God to letting oneself down from a ledge in a fog, but not as a leap into the unknown—rather, trusting a voice from below to the effect that there is another ledge, just out of reach, a couple of feet

beneath one's feet. Schaeffer did a tremendous amount of hiking, but I don't think that he did much rock climbing. If he had, he would have recognized that there is more similarity between his example and Kierkegaard's than he thought. Schaeffer's step, or drop, is a reasonable, plausible, justifiable step, because it is based on trustworthy assurances from a reliable source. All these reduce the risk, but nevertheless, at the moment that one has to let go of the solid rock and let oneself fall—even on the basis of someone else's confident assurances—there is a moment when you give up the security that you had on the basis of trust in someone you cannot see.

In Kierkegaard's day, church Christianity had become so comfortable that many people no longer realized that it does involve risking one's life: hence his emphasis on stepping off into the unknown. In Schaeffer's day—which is also our own—confidence in the truth of Christianity has been so undermined that many people no longer realize that there are good and sufficient reasons for taking that "step." To the extent that Kierkegaard meant that faith is an irrational, absurd "leap," he was mistaken. But to the extent that he meant that, in spite of all the arguments, assurances, and testimonies of happy and successful Christians, it does involve an act of courage, letting go of worldly security before being caught and upheld by God, he was right. A step is less threatening than a leap, especially in the mountains, but where faith is concerned, even a simple step involves commitment and requires courage.

HAROLD O. J. BROWN

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9/21/84



Søren at age 27;
his fiancée, Regine Olsen;
and Kierkegaard's Copenhagen.



A Misunderstood REFORMER

C. STEPHEN EVANS

ON OCTOBER 31, 1517, Martin Luther nailed his 95 theses on the door of the church in Wittenberg, thus initiating the Protestant Reformation. As we all know, Luther's reforms were successful—Protestant churches today rightfully revere his memory. But, I submit, Luther would have been just as successful in God's eyes had he been promptly burned at the stake and his reforms suppressed, as happened to other reformers. Had Luther been unsuccessful in an external sense, we might still learn every bit as much from his life and writings.

On December 18, 1854, a follower of Luther again attempted to reform the church, in this case by publishing a series of articles in newspapers and magazines. Like Luther, he risked persecution and punishment for being so bold as to criticize the established church. He had two great differences from Luther, however. First, the church this man criticized was not the Roman Catholic church, it was a Lutheran church. Second, the proposed revival and reform was stillborn; little was

achieved in an external sense. But I think this Lutheran was a success in God's eyes, and that we have much to learn from the "failed" reformer—perhaps as much as from Luther himself.

The following quote, from a newspaper article published by this man on March 26, 1855, gives a clear view of his estimate of the "official" Christianity of his land:

"The religious situation in our country is: Christianity (that is, the Christianity of the New Testament—and everything else is not Christianity, least of all by calling itself such), Christianity does not exist—as almost anyone must be able to see as well as I.

"We have, if you will, a complete crew of bishops, deans, and priests; learned men, eminently learned, talented, gifted, humanly well-meaning; they all declaim—doing it well, very well, eminently well, or tolerably well, or badly—but not one of them is in the character of the Christianity of the New Testament. But if such is the case, the existence of this Christian crew is so far from being, Christianly considered, advantageous to Christianity that it is far rather a peril because it is so infinitely likely to give rise to a false impression

and the false inference that when we have such a complete crew we must of course have Christianity, too. A geographer, for example, when he has assured himself of the existence of this crew, would think that he was thoroughly justified in putting into his geography the statement that the Christian religion prevails in the land.

"We have what one might call a complete inventory of churches, bells, organs, benches, alms-boxes, foot-warmers, tables, hearses, etc. But when Christianity does not exist, the existence of this inventory, so far from being, Christianly considered, an advantage, is far rather a peril, because it is so infinitely likely to give rise to a false impression and the false inference that when we have such a complete Christian inventory we must of course have Christianity, too. A statistician, for example, when he had assured himself of the existence of this Christian inventory, would think that he was thoroughly justified in putting into his statistics the statement that the Christian religion is the prevailing one in the land.

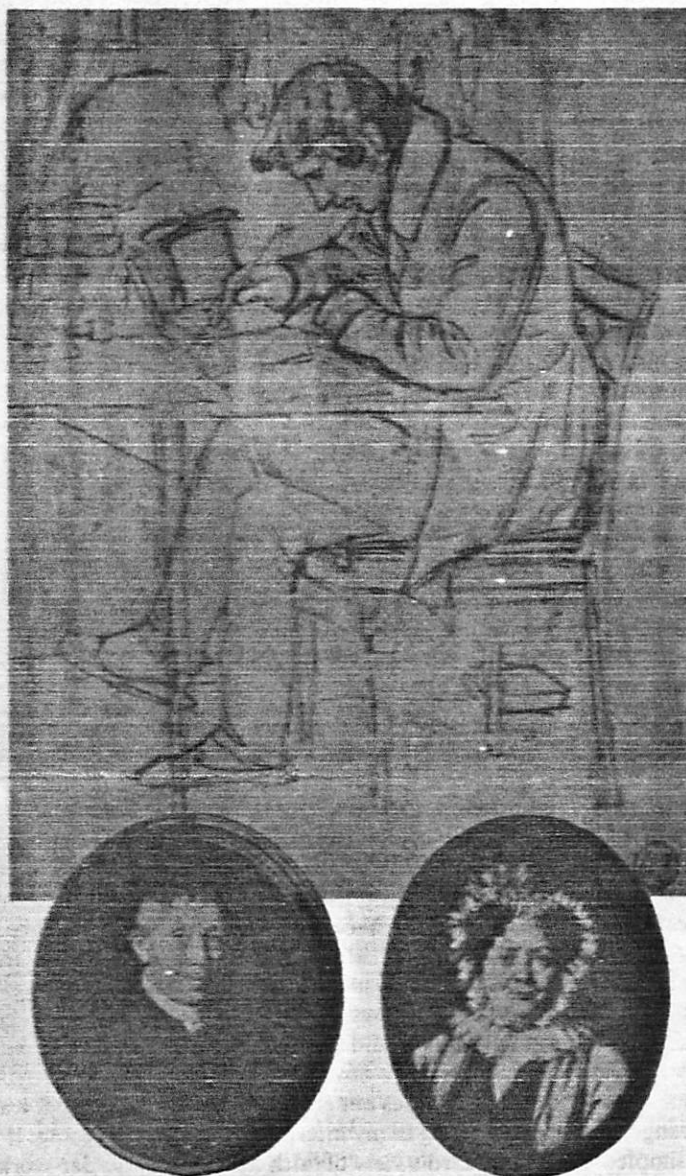
"We are what is called a 'Christian' nation—but in such a sense that not a single one of us is in the character of the

Søren Kierkegaard has burst on the consciousness of the twentieth century like a time bomb with a long-delayed fuse.

Christianity of the New Testament."

The name of the would-be reformer was Søren Kierkegaard. He devoted his life to the task he described as "the reintroduction of Christianity into Christendom." Kierkegaard considered himself a missionary whose task was to present the gospel. However, as he so clearly saw, his task was complicated by the fact that God sent him, not to a pagan country, but to a "Christian nation," to a people gripped by the illusion that "we are all Christians." The illusion of Christendom is the illusion that being a Christian is simply to be a nice person, to conform to the established social norms. Against this comfortable illusion, fostered by an established state church, Kierkegaard thundered that to be a Christian one must consciously, as an individual before God, strive to be a follower of Christ—the Christ who served the poor and the lowly and was willing to suffer at the hands of the rich and powerful.

WHO WAS SØREN KIERKEGAARD?
He was born in Copenhagen in 1813 to a wealthy family. His father was a stern, conservative Lutheran who also liked to visit the local Moravian church, where young Søren no doubt absorbed some of the same earnest evangelical piety that John and Charles Wesley did earlier when, as missionaries to Georgia, they had encountered Moravians. Søren attended the university and sowed a few wild oats as a student, but was reconciled to his father and his faith before his father died. Preparing for a career as a pastor, he took a degree in theology and fell deeply in love with a young girl, Regine Olsen, whom he courted avidly. The two were engaged, but very soon thereafter Søren realized he had made a mistake.



Søren as a student; his father, Michael Pedersen Kierkegaard, and mother, Anne Lund Kierkegaard.

The reasons for this are complicated and no one knows them exactly. One element was Søren's own psychological temperament. He suffered greatly from what he termed his melancholy, what we would today call severe depression. This depression seems to have been bound up in some way with Søren's relation to his father, whose outward piety somehow disguised what was to Søren an awful family secret. Søren felt that no one could understand him without knowing this secret, yet he felt that to tell anyone would be a violation of the memory of his dead and much-loved father.

Søren also believed that God had called him to the single life; he was called to be willing to sacrifice the thing he loved most, as Abraham had been called by God to be willing to sacrifice Isaac. The conviction slowly grew in him that a special Providence had marked him out to do something unique. He obeyed what he saw as God's will and broke the engagement, though he loved Regine and grieved for her the rest of his life.

Instead of getting married and taking a pastorate, Kierkegaard began to write—a torrent of books, totaling 20 volumes in the latest Danish edition. Almost all were written in a brief period of about eight years. All were directed to the end of reintroducing Christianity into Christendom. The books were little read in his own time and were almost totally unknown outside Denmark. Kierkegaard's authorship was culminated at the age of 42 with scathing newspaper and magazine articles, which are collected and printed in English under the title *Attack on Christendom*. In the middle of the firestorm raised by this attack, he collapsed on the street, was taken to a hospital, and shortly died. At his death he was penniless; he had exhausted his family fortune and would have faced destitution if he had lived longer.

And what were the external results of all this? The question is not one in which the melancholy Dane would have been interested since he saw so clearly that the only result that counts is whether or not he as an individual had striven, with all his heart, to will one thing—God's will. Nevertheless, the external results are interesting. In his own lifetime, there was a slight stir that may have had an impact on the growth of the Scandinavian "free churches." But as his writings slowly became known and translated into other languages,



A Misunderstood REFORMER

Søren Kierkegaard burst on the consciousness of the twentieth century like a time bomb with a long-delayed fuse. Today he is a world-famous author whose writings have inspired poets, playwrights, and novelists, and he is often called "the father of existentialism" (a title I am sure he would repudiate, however).

***STRANGELY, ALMOST THE ONLY GROUP** that does not admire and revere Kierkegaard is the one group with whom I believe he had the strongest degree of spiritual kinship: evangelical Christians. More than once I have been asked by evangelicals whether or not Kierkegaard was a Christian. More than once I have seen shocked faces when I expressed my opinion that Kierkegaard is a great resource for Christian philosophers, theologians, and psychologists. Why should this be so?

The answer is complicated, and is probably best left to the historian. But at least one section of the complicated answer is that some well-known evangelical pastors and authors have chosen Kierkegaard as a central villain in their account of how the twentieth century lost its faith and its moorings. Francis Schaeffer, for example, describes Kierkegaard as the individual who first fell below the "line of despair." (Schaeffer does admit that Kierkegaard's devotional writings can be helpful.)

But another reason for the evangelical neglect of Kierkegaard is simple: We have not read his books. To students who ask me whether or not Schaeffer's criticisms of Kierkegaard are valid, I have a standard reply: "See for yourself." Read Kierkegaard. Especially, read his theological and devotional writings, which are the centerpiece of his authorship. Read his *Works of Love*, *Training in Christianity*, and *Purity of Heart Is to Will One Thing*.

Poor Kierkegaard has suffered more than any author I know of from a generation of evangelical ignorance. But that ignorance is at least somewhat understandable. When Kierkegaard was being discovered earlier in this century, evangelicals were being evicted from the seminaries and universities. The people who initially interpreted Kier-

kegaard were sometimes profoundly unsympathetic to orthodox Christianity. Where they could, they minimized his faith; where they could not, they distorted its meanings. Tragically, evangelicals accepted the interpretation of Søren Kierkegaard presented by his and their common enemy, and failed to understand his message.

There are exceptions. Edward Carnell, Kenneth Hamilton, Vernard Eller, and Vernon Grounds are pioneering evangelicals who appreciated his work. But by and large, their appreciation of Kierkegaard has been eclipsed by the denunciations of others.

None of this means, of course, that Kierkegaard is right on every issue. His view of the relation of faith to reason has been challenged by many as too "fideistic" (although the same charge is hurled by rationalists at Luther and Calvin). Kierkegaard did share with Pascal an appreciation of the role of passion in the Christian life, and he did strongly emphasize the limits of rational evidence in bringing someone to Christian faith. I believe that the common interpretation of Kierkegaard as an irrationalist or subjectivist is wrong. Many misinterpretations arose because Kierkegaard sometimes wrote under pseudonyms, "characters" or "personae" he invented, all with a life of their own. These pseudonyms, some of whom are non-Christian, say things that Kierkegaard himself did not agree with, just as characters in a novel often say things the novelist does not endorse. But even if I am wrong in my interpretation, and Kierkegaard's view of faith and reason is defective, there are still many areas where evangelicals can learn from him. Must an author be infallible to be read with profit, or appreciated as a Christian brother?

There are two equally important reasons why evangelicals should read Kierkegaard. Reason number one is that he can help us to say what we have to say to the world today. He can give us the insight we need to confront both non-Christians and pseudo-Christians. Reason number two is that Kierkegaard has a prophetic message for us. He has something to say to us that we need to hear if we are not to become the fitting targets of his attack on Christendom.

Let me expand on each of these points. First, how can Kierkegaard help evan-

gelicals articulate our message? Kierkegaard wrote at a critical period, the period when modernist, liberal theology was first coming into existence. As he saw it, the crucial issues that liberal theology put to us were the issues of the person of Jesus and the authority of Jesus, the apostles, and, ultimately, the Scriptures. Liberal theology was beginning to view special revelation as simply a record of humankind's evolving religious sensitivity. In this schema, the Scriptures have no inherent authority except insofar as we recognize that authority. The *ultimate* authority is human experience and human reason. Kierkegaard saw clearly that the philosophical presupposition that underlay this was that human beings are basically good; we have an inherent relationship to God, and a capacity to know God on our own. Kierkegaard pointed out clearly that this presupposition is essentially identical with pagan thought. It was Plato who taught that the soul possesses a natural affinity for the divine, which merely has to be recollected.

This pagan assumption is the very opposite of Christianity, which begins with the assumption that human beings are sinners—that we lack the truth and the capacity to know the truth and must be given that truth and that capacity in a revelation from God. In his *Philosophical Fragments*, Kierkegaard argues convincingly that the only way God could reveal himself to us without destroying our freedom and our personhood was to come to us as a human being. If we loved the omnipotent wonder worker but not the one who humbled himself to be a servant, we would not truly love God, or know God as he is.

***THE CHALLENGE KIERKEGAARD PRESENTED** to liberal theology was essentially a demand for honesty. There is a clear difference between paganism and Christianity. That a person might prefer paganism to Christianity is one thing. It is understandable and even natural, in a sense, given our sinfulness. But to *confuse* paganism with Christianity, to call what is essentially paganism Christianity, is outrageous. The argument Kierkegaard developed here is as relevant against modernist theologies today as it was in his own time. The central issues are still

the issues of authority and the person of Christ. And to see that the philosophical presuppositions of modern theology are essentially pagan is to gain a powerful critical tool.

I would not want, however, for evangelicals to see Kierkegaard as merely providing us with a weapon with which to club the modernist theologian—for he has critical words we need to hear, and need to hear badly. Kierkegaard's attack on Christendom is an attack that sometimes cuts close to home.

We might at first be inclined to think that Kierkegaard's attack on "Christendom" is inapplicable to evangelicals today. After all, the object of his attack was an established state church, where it was assumed that baptism automatically made one a Christian. And we evangelicals stress more than anyone the necessity of a personal decision to become a Christian. Most evangelicals would vehemently oppose the imposition of an established religion.

But we would be very wrong in thinking Kierkegaard's criticisms of Christendom have no application to us. At the deepest level, Kierkegaard's attack on Christendom is an attack on a Christianity that has been confused with and absorbed by a human culture. Being a Christian had become confused with being a good Dane. A state church makes this mistake easy, but it is easy enough to make without a state church.

We, too, confuse Christianity with culture. We take away its transcendent, prophetic power in at least two ways. First, by confusing Christianity with Americanism. Civil religion is in some ways a more menacing danger here than would be a state church, primarily because the confusion of Christian commitment and nationalistic and cultural values can be so easily overlooked. We are easily captured by political leaders who know how to use the term "God" cleverly, and then attach that religious

devotion to nationalistic causes. We are hoodwinked by politicians who know how to sound pious, who know how to confirm our good opinion of ourselves by insinuating we are God's chosen people as a political nation. Before we campaign too loudly for prayer in public schools, we ought to ponder carefully the effects of lowest-common-denominator religion—we ought to beware because we may come to believe this is really a Christian country.

Second, we not only confuse Christianity with our American culture, we also confuse it with our evangelical subculture. Evangelicalism can, and to

a degree has, become a culture of its own, with its own cultural taboos and in-group jargon. To what extent have we consciously or unconsciously equated being a Christian with being a part of that particular subculture?

Even our theology can mislead us here. Insofar as our theological positions are used to demarcate a culture, then they have ceased to be authentic theology.

When theology is used primarily to decide who belongs to our group and who does not, rather than to energize our corporate lives as followers of Jesus, then theology begets the error of Christendom, for, at bottom, Christendom is just taking your faith for granted. How easy it is to take your faith for granted when you know you are on the right side of all the intellectual issues! "Of course I'm a Christian. I'm an evangelical; I can sign the standard evangelical statement of faith!" It is easy to forget that true godliness does not consist of words but of power.

Kierkegaard, more than anyone I know, can help remind evangelicals that Christianity is a manner of being, a way of existing, not merely an affirmation of doctrine. But he can remind us of this in a way that will not precipitate a slide back into the contempt for reason and the life of the mind that has

sometimes infected evangelicalism and fundamentalism.

KIERKEGAARD IS A RARE PERSON, an intellectual's intellectual, one of the rarest geniuses of human history. He employed that genius to help people, intellectuals and nonintellectuals, regain a sense of what human life is all about, of what it means to exist as a Christian.

In conclusion, I quote a prayer of Kierkegaard's, a prayer that is the invocation of his book *Works of Love*. That book is his greatest theological work, and it is important because it reminds us that his fundamental thought is not merely negative and polemical, as this article might imply, but rather that he gives us deep and new insights into that love which is the centerpiece of Christian existence:

How could love be rightly discussed if You were forgotten, O God of love, source of all love in heaven and on earth, You who spared nothing but gave all in love, You who are love, so that one who loves is what he is only by being in You! How could love properly be discussed if You were forgotten, You who made manifest what love is, You, our Saviour and Redeemer, who gave Yourself to save all! How could love be rightly discussed if You were forgotten, O Spirit of Love, You who take nothing for Your own but remind us of that sacrifice of love, remind the believer to love as he is loved, and his neighbour as himself? O Eternal Love, You who are everywhere present and never without witness wherever You are called upon, be not without witness in what is said here about love or about the works of love. There are only a few acts which human language specifically and narrowly calls works of love, but heaven is such that no act can be pleasing there unless it is an act of love—sincere in self-renunciation, impelled by love itself, and for this very reason claiming no compensation. □

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The "Other" Jesus, by Kierkegaard

Kierkegaard Bibliographic Library

%Key:Arbaugh, 1968

%Author:Arbaugh, G.E. and G.B.

%Title:Kierkegaard's Authorship: A Guide to the Writings of Kierkegaard.

%Publisher:London: Allen and Unwin, 1968.

%Annotation:This work was produced in the 60's (Brown isn't sure whether it's still in print). It's a useful hand book on all of the things that Kierkegaard wrote with an introduction and a brief analysis of each book. Good but dated.

%:

%Key:Bretall, 1946

%Author:Kierkegaard, Soren.

%Title:A Kierkegaard Anthology. Robert Bretall, ed.

%Publisher:Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1946.

%Annotation:

%:

%Key:Brown,C., 1985

%Author:Brown, Colin.

%Title:Jesus in European Protestant Thought, 1778-1860.

%Publisher:Durham, North Carolina: The Labyrinth Press, 1985.

%Annotation:Ph.D. research. There's a chapter on Kierkegaard (actually it's a chapter on Kierkegaard and his Christology).

%:

%Key:Brown,O.J., 1984

%Author:Brown, Harold O.J.

%Title:"Kierkegaard's Leap or Schaeffer's Step?" Christianity Today.

%Publisher:Dec 4, 1984.

%Annotation:

%:

%Key:Carnell, 1965

%Author:Carnell, E.J.

%Title:The Burden of Soren Kierkegaard.

%Publisher:Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1965.

%Annotation:A valiant book that was written twenty years ago. Independent thinker. Useful book.

%:

%Key:Chadwick

%Author:Chadwick, H.

%Title:Lessing: Theological Writings.

%Publisher:

%Annotation:

%:

%Key:Crites, 1972

%Author:Crites, Stephen.

%Title:In the Twilight of Christendom: Hegel vs. Kierkegaard on Faith and History.

%Publisher:Chambersburg, PA: American Academy of Religion, 1972.

Kierkegaard Bibliographic Library

%Annotation: This an important and interesting book comparing Kierkegaard and Hegel.
%:

%Key: Diem, 1959
%Author: Diem, H.
%Title: Kierkegaard's Dialectic of Existence.
%Publisher: Edinburgh and London: Oliver and Boyd, 1959.
%Annotation: A dense and difficult book.
%:

%Key: Dunning
%Author: Dunning.
%Title: Kierkegaard, Dialectic of Inwardness.
%Publisher: Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press.
%Annotation:
%:

%Key: Dupre, 1954
%Author: Dupre, L.
%Title: Kierkegaard as Theologian.
%Publisher: London: Sheed and Ward, 1954.
%Annotation: Roman Catholic scholar, a very enlightening book.
%:

%Key: Elrod, 1981
%Author: Elrod, J.W.
%Title: Kierkegaard and Christendom.
%Publisher: Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1981.
%Annotation: A very interesting and important book, especially dealing with the social and religious background of the Danish Lutheran Church.
%:

%Key: Evan, 1983
%Author: Evans, C. Steven.
%Title: Kierkegaard's "Fragments" and "Postscript": The Religious Philosophy of Johannes Climacus.
%Publisher: Atlantic Highlands: Humanities Press, 1983.
%Annotation: It might sound obscure and difficult, judging from the title, but it is central to understanding what Kierkegaard is doing.
%:

%Key: Evans, 1984
%Author: Evans, C. Steven.
%Title: "A Misunderstood Reformer" Christianity Today.
%Publisher: Sept 21, 1984.
%Annotation:
%:

%Key: F&T
%Author: Kierkegaard, Soren.
%Title: Fear & Trembling/Repetition: Kierkegaard's Writings VI.

Kierkegaard Bibliographic Library

trans., ed., and introduction, H.V. and E.H. Hong.
%Publisher: Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press,
1983.

%Annotation:

%:

%Key: Fenger, 1980

%Author: Fenger, H.

%Title: Kierkegaard, The Myths and their Origins: Studies in the Kierkegaardian Papers and Letters.

%Publisher: New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1980.

%Annotation: Fenger is a contemporary Danish scholar. this work is somewhat iconoclastic, that is, he is knocking Kierkegaard. but it does contain alot of useful material. he thinks that Kierkegaard was a self-conscious poser. Brown feels that he was self-conscious and that he did strike poses. Brown finds chapter three of this book, "Kierkegaard in the doctor's Office," most interesting in reviewing different theories about what was wrong with Kierkegaard.

%:

%Key: Gill

%Author: Gill, J.

%Title: Essays on Kierkegaard.

%Publisher:

%Annotation:

%:

%Key: Hannay, 1982

%Author: Hannay, A.

%Title: Kierkegaard.

%Publisher: London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1982.

%Annotation: This is a good book for grasping Kierkegaard's philosophy.

%:

%Key: Hegel, A:LFA

%Author: Hegel.

%Title: Aesthetics: Lectures of the Fine Arts. Knox, trans.

%Publisher: Oxford: Oxford Press, 1972.

%Annotation:

%:

%Key: Hegel, CR

%Author: Hegel.

%Title: Christian Religion.

%Publisher:

%Annotation:

%:

%Key: Hegel, PR

%Author: Hegel.

%Title: The Philosophy of Right.

%Publisher: 1821.

%Annotation:

Kierkegaard Bibliographic Library

%:

%Key:Hegel, PS
%Author:Hegel.
%Title:Phenomenology of Spirit. A.V. Miller, ed.
%Publisher:
%Annotation:
%:

%Key:J&P
%Author:Kierkegaard, Soren.
%Title:Journals and Papers. 7 volumes, tr. and ed., J.V. and E.H. Hong.
%Publisher:Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1967-78.
%Annotation:
%:

%Key:Kahn
%Author:Kahn, A.
%Title:"Salighed" As Happiness? Kierkegaard On The Concept of
"Salighed".
%Publisher:
%Annotation:
%:

%Key:Kant
%Author:Kant.
%Title:Critique of Pure Reason.
%Publisher:
%Annotation:
%:

%Key:Kaufman
%Author:Kaufmann, Walter.
%Title:Hegel Reinterpreted.
%Publisher:
%Annotation:
%:

%Key:L&D
%Author:Kierkegaard, Soren.
%Title:Letters and Documents, Kierkegaards Writings 25, tr.
Henrik Rosenmeier.
%Publisher:Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press,
1978.
%Annotation: Letters and Documents is part of a new critical
edition. It has a good chronology, or list of what was taking
place during (before and after ?) Kierkegaard's lifetime (pages
ix-xv) and various maps of Copenhagen and environ in the back of
the book.
%:

%Key:Lebowitz
%Author:Lebowitz.
%Title:Kierkegaard, A Life of Allegory.
%Publisher:

Kierkegaard Bibliographic Library

%Annotation:

%:

%Key:Lessing

%Author:Lessing, ed.

%Title:Wottenbuttel Fragments.

%Publisher:

%Annotation:

%:

%Key:Lowrie, 1942

%Author:Lowrie, Walter.

%Title:A Short Life of Kierkegaard.

%Publisher:Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1942.

%Annotation: A very important Kierkegaard scholar.

%:

%Key:Lowrie, 1962

%Author:Lowrie, Walter.

%Title:Kierkegaard, 2 volumes.

%Publisher:New York: Harper Torchbook, 1962.

%Annotation:

%:

%Key:Mackey

%Author:Mackey, Louis.

%Title:Kierkegaard, A Kind of Poet.

%Publisher:

%Annotation:Mackey's theory is that many have attempted to analyse Kierkegaard as a philosopher (the Grandfather of Existentialism, etc.) but few people have taken seriously Kierkegaard's own description of himself as a Poet.

%:

%Key:Malantschuk, 1971

%Author:Malantschuk, Gregor.

%Title:Kierkegaard's Thought.

%Publisher:Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1971.

%Annotation: This is an important analysis of Kierkegaard as a philosopher.

%:

%Key:Malantschuk, 1980

%Author:Malantschuk, Gregor.

%Title:The Controversial Kierkegaard. H.V.Hong & E.H.Hong, trans.

%Publisher:Waterloo, Ontario, Canada: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1980

%Annotation:

%:

%Key:Michalson, 1985

%Author:Michalson, Gordon E.

Kierkegaard Bibliographic Library

%Title:Lessing's "Ugly Ditch": A Study of Theology and History.
%Publisher:University Park and London: The Pennsylvania state
University Press, 1985.
%Annotation:odd title, question of history and significant
religious truth.
%:

%Key:Pascal
%Author:Pascal.
%Title:Pensees. Penguin edition.
%Publisher:
%Annotation:
%:

%Key:Perkins
%Author:Perkins, R.C., ed.,
%Title:Kierkegaard, Fear & Trembling: A Critical Appraisal.
%Publisher:University of Alabama Press.
%Annotation:
%:

%Key:Schleife
%Author:Schleife & Markley.
%Title:Kierkegaard And Literature.
%Publisher:
%Annotation:
%:

%Key:Smith, 1981
%Author:Smith, J.H., ed.
%Title:Kierkegaard's Truth: The Disclosure of the Self,
Psychiatry and the Humanities, vol 5.
%Publisher:New Haven: Yale University Press, 1981.
%Annotation:psychological study.
%:

%Key:Sponhiem, 1968
%Author:Sponhiem, Paul.
%Title:Kierkegaard on Christ and Christian Coherence.
%Publisher: New York: Harper and Row, 1968.
%Annotation: A bit complicated but important study.
%:

%Key:Stendahl, 1976
%Author:Stendahl, B.
%Title:Soren Kierkegaard.
%Publisher:Boston: Twayne, 1976.
%Annotation: A short study.
%:

%Key:Strauss
%Author:Strauss.
%Title:Life of Jesus.
%Publisher:
%Annotation:

Kierkegaard Bibliographic Library

%:

%Key:Thulstrup, 1978-
%Author:Thulstrup, N.
%Title:Bibliotheca Kierkegaardiana, 16 vols (planned).
%Publisher:Copenhagen: C.A. Reitzel, 1978-.
%Annotation:
%:

%Key:Thulstrup, 1980
%Author:Thulstrup, N.
%Title:Kierkegaard's Relation to Hegel.
%Publisher:Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press,
1980.
%Annotation:
%:

%Key:Thulstrup, 1984
%Author:Thulstrup, N.
%Title:Commentary on Kierkegaard's Concluding Unscientific
Postscript with a New Introduction.
%Publisher:Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press,
1984.
%Annotation: This "commentary" deals with Kierkegaard's
intellectual background (thus best overview of Kant, Hegel and
Kierkegaard), and annotation of Kierkegaard's works and its
allusions.
%:

%Key:Wittgenstien
%Author:Wittgenstien.
%Title:Zettel. 717.
%Publisher:
%Annotation:
%: